

Remarks

Favorable reconsideration of this application, in view of the above amendments and in light of the following remarks and discussion, is respectfully requested.

Applicants respectfully request entry of this response, as the response places the application in clear condition for allowance or alternatively places the claims in better form for appeal. Specifically, Applicants have amended claims to overcome outstanding rejections.

Claims 1-25 and 28-32 are currently pending in the application; Claims 1, 13, 28, 31, and 32 having been amended by way of the present response.

In the outstanding Office Action a substitute specification was required; Claims 1-5, 13-17, and 31 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,914,472 to Foladare et al. (Foladare); Claims 8-12, 20-25, and 32 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Foladare in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,657,660 to Shiota et al. (Shiota); Claims 6, 7, 18, 19, and 28 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Foladare in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,433,818 to Steinberg et al. (Steinberg); and Claims 29 and 30 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Foladare and Steinberg, and further in view of Shiota.

As stated above a substitute specification was required. In response, Applicants respectfully submit herewith substitute and marked-up specifications. Applicants respectfully assert that no new matter has been added to the specification.

As stated above Claims 1-5, 13-17, and 31 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Foladare. Claims 8-12, 20-25, and 32 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Foladare in view of Shiota. Claims 6, 7, 18, 19, and 28 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Foladare in view of Steinberg. Claims 29 and 30 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable

over Foladare and Steinberg, and further in view of Shiota. Applicants respectfully assert that the amendments to the claims have overcome the rejections for the following reasons.

The present invention is directed to lending management systems (i.e., independent Claims 1 and 13), lending reservation methods (i.e., independent Claim 28), and computer readable recording mediums for recording a computer program containing instructions configured to provide a lending reservation method (i.e., independent Claim 31).

Independent Claim 1 recites a client terminal connected to a network, and a server terminal connected to the network and configured to be connected to an information device. The client terminal includes an image transmission designating unit configured to transmit an input image data from an image captured by the information device. Independent Claim 13 recites a client terminal connected to a network, and a server terminal including a server connected to the network, the server terminal configured to be connected to an information device. The client terminal includes an image transmission designating unit configured to transmit an input image data from an image captured by image inputting means of the information device. Independent Claims 28 and 31 recite authenticating a user, confirming that the reservation is available with respect to the information device, confirming an identity of the user who registers the reservation, and releasing a lock of the information device. Independent Claim 28 and 31 each further recite designating a method for transmitting an image captured by the information device after the information device is reconnected to a network used in the lending reservation method.

Foladare is directed to a credit card spending authorization control. Applicants respectfully assert that Foladare does not teach or suggest, however, the claimed features of an image transmission designating unit configured to transmit an input image data from an image captured by an information device, as recited in independent Claims 1, 13, and does not teach or suggest the claimed features of designating a method for transmitting an image

captured by an information device after the information device is reconnected to a network, as recited in independent Claims 28, and 31. Specifically, Applicants respectfully assert that Foladare does not show or state an image captured by an information device, as Foladare is directed to authorization control of a credit card that does not capture an image. Thus, Applicants respectfully further assert that Foladare does not show or state an image transmission designating unit transmitting data from the image or designating a method for transmitting the image, as recited in the independent claims.

Applicants respectfully assert that the claimed features recited in independent Claims 1, 13, 28, and 31 can provide numerous advantages that are not provided by Foladare. By way of specific non-limiting examples, Applicants respectfully assert that the features recited in independent Claims 1, 13, 28, and 31 can permit physical lending of an information device, such a digital camera, for a lending period. When the information device is returned at an expiration of the lending period, the information device can automatically transmit images captured by the information device during the lending period. The images can be automatically transmitted by a network, rather than requiring the use of a removable storage medium (e.g., a smart card) that should be tracked to prevent the removable storage medium from being lost or misplaced. Therefore, overall management of the information device is simplified, and costs associated with tracking and/or replacement of the removable storage medium are avoided.¹ Applicants respectfully assert that such advantages are not relevant to Foladare, because Foladare is directed to an authorization control system, rather than a lending system, and because Foladare is not concerned with transmitting images captured by the credit card to promote simplified lending of the credit card.

¹ Page 25, lines 6-17, of the originally filed application.

Thus, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of independent Claims 1, 13, and 31 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) be withdrawn, and the allowance of independent Claims 1, 13, and 31.

With respect to the rejection of independent Claim 28, the Office Action relies on Steinberg in an attempt to remedy the deficiencies of Foladare. Applicants respectfully assert, however, that Steinberg does not remedy these deficiencies. Specifically, Applicants respectfully assert that Steinberg does not teach or suggest the claimed features of designating a method for transmitting an image captured by an information device, as recited in independent Claim 28.

Thus, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of independent Claim 28 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) be withdrawn, and the allowance of independent Claim 28.

Applicants respectfully assert that Claims 2-12, 14-25, 29, 30, and 32 are allowable for the same reasons as the independent claims from which they depend, as well as for their own features. Thus, Applicants respectfully request the allowance of dependent Claims 2-12, 14-25, 29, 30, and 32.

Consequently, in view of the present amendment, no further issues are believed to be outstanding in the present application, and the present application is believed to be in condition for formal Allowance. A Notice of Allowance for Claims 1-25 and 28-32 is earnestly solicited.

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Reply to Office Action of November 10, 2004

Should the Examiner deem that any further action is necessary to place this application in even better form for allowance, the Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned representative at the below listed telephone number.

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